

speculative philosophy and theology also – than to open its eyes, or rather to turn its gaze from the internal towards the external, i.e., I change the object as it is in the imagination into the object as it is in reality.

But certainly for the present age, which prefers the sign to the thing signified, the copy to the original, fancy to reality, the appearance to the essence, this change, inasmuch as it does away with illusion, is an absolute annihilation, or at least a reckless profanation; for in these days *illusion only is sacred, truth profane*. Nay, sacredness is held to be enhanced in proportion as truth decreases and illusion increases, so that the highest degree of illusion comes to be the highest degree of sacredness. Religion has disappeared, and for it has been substituted, even among Protestants, the *appearance* in order at least that 'the faith' may be imparted to the *ing* multitude; *that* faith being still the Christian, because *nd* now as they did a thousand years ago, and now, as *of* the faith are in vogue. That which has no longer any *of* the modern world is only an ostensible faith, a faith *at* it fancies that it believes, and is only an undecided, *still* to pass current as *opinion*: that which is no longer *still* at least to *seem* sacred. Hence the simulated religious *ge*...

...w sharp touches, the historical solution of Christianity, *anity* has in fact long vanished, not only from the reason *d*, that it is nothing more than a *fixed idea*, in flagrant *nd* life assurance companies, our railroads and steam- *ulpture* galleries, our military and industrial schools, our *ms*.

9 Karl Marx (1818–1883) on Alienation

The concept of 'alienation' has been widely applied to the arts in the modern period, where it is usually taken to indicate a disaffected psychological disposition on the part of the artist. In the present text, however, Marx views alienation in social terms. He sees it as a characteristic of men's estrangement from their work and their products in the period of modern capitalist production. That which makes humans human, referred to by Marx as their 'species being', is their free, creative capacity. Capitalist commodity production robs them of this. To an extent, for Marx, the opposite of the alienated labour demanded by commodity production is to be found in the work of art; though the comparison is not explicitly made in the present text. Marx wrote these early notes in Paris in 1844. After graduating in philosophy from university in Germany, he had taken up a career in journalism. Following the censorship of his newspaper, he moved to Paris, the centre of radical politics and culture for the whole of Europe, in late 1843. The manuscript remained unpublished in his lifetime. The ideas contained in it however became influential in the twentieth century, following its first publication in the *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe*, Moscow, 1927–35. The present extracts are from the translation of the 'Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts' of 1844 by Gregor Benton, in *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975, pp. 323–30, 359–61.

[...] The *devaluation* of the human world grows in direct proportion to the *increase in value* of the world of things. Labour not only produces commodities; it also produces itself and the workers as a *commodity* and it does so in the same proportion in which it produces commodities in general.

This fact simply means that the object that labour produces, its product, stands opposed to it as *something alien*, as a *power independent* of the producer. The product of labour is labour embodied and made material in an object, it is the *objectification* of labour. The realization of labour is its objectification. In the sphere of political economy this realization of labour appears as a *loss of reality* for the worker, objectification as *loss of and bondage to the object*, and appropriation as *estrangement*, as *alienation*. [...]

Up to now we have considered the estrangement, the alienation of the worker only from one aspect, i.e. his *relationship to the products of his labour*. But estrangement manifests itself not only in the result, but also in the *act of production*, within the *activity of production* itself. How could the product of the worker's activity confront him as something alien if it were not for the fact that in the act of production he was estranging himself from himself? After all, the product is simply the *résumé* of the activity, of the production. So if the product of labour is alienation, production itself must be active alienation, the alienation of activity, the activity of alienation. The estrangement of the object of labour merely summarizes the estrangement, the alienation in the activity of labour itself. [...]

We now have to derive a third feature of *estranged labour* from the two we have already looked at.

Man is a species-being, not only because he practically and theoretically makes the species – both his own and those of other things – his object, but also – and this is simply another way of saying the same thing – because he looks upon himself as the present, living species, because he looks upon himself as a *universal* and therefore free being.

Species-life, both for man and for animals, consists physically in the fact that man, like animals, lives from inorganic nature; and because man is more universal than animals, so too is the area of inorganic nature from which he lives more universal. Just as plants, animals, stones, air, light, etc., theoretically form a part of human consciousness, partly as objects of science and partly as objects of art – his spiritual inorganic nature, his spiritual means of life, which he must first prepare before he can enjoy and digest them – so too in practice they form a part of human life and human activity. [...]

The animal is immediately one with its life activity. It is not distinct from that activity; it *is* that activity. Man makes his life activity itself an object of his will and consciousness. He has conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he directly merges. Conscious life activity directly distinguishes man from animal life activity. Only because of that is he a species-being. Or rather, he is a conscious being, i.e. his own life is an object for him, only because he is a species-being. Only because of that is his activity free activity. Estranged labour reverses the relationship so that man, just because he is a conscious being, makes his life activity, his *being*, a mere means for his *existence*.

The practical creation of an *objective world*, the *fashioning* of inorganic nature, is proof that man is a conscious species-being, i.e. a being which treats the species as its own essential being or itself as a species-being. It is true that animals also produce. They build nests and dwellings, like the bee, the beaver, the ant, etc. But they produce only their own immediate needs or those of their young; they produce one-sidedly, while man produces universally; they produce only when immediate physical need compels them to do so, while man produces even when he is free from physical need and truly produces only in freedom from such need; they produce only themselves, while man reproduces the whole of nature; their products belong immediately to their physical bodies, while man freely confronts his own product. Animals produce only according to the standards and needs of the species to which they belong, while man is capable of producing according to the standards of every species and of applying to each object its inherent standard; hence man also produces in accordance with the laws of beauty.

It is therefore in his fashioning of the objective that man really proves himself to be a *species-being*. Such production is his active species-life. Through it nature appears as *his work and his reality*. The object of labour is therefore the *objectification of the species-life of man*: for man reproduces himself not only intellectually, in his consciousness, but actively and actually, and he can therefore contemplate himself in a world he himself has created. In tearing away the object of his production from man, estranged labour therefore tears away from him his *species-life*, his true species-objectivity, and transforms his advantage over animals into the disadvantage that his inorganic body, nature, is taken from him. [...]

An immediate consequence of man's estrangement from the product of his labour, his life activity, his species-being, is the *estrangement of man from man*. When man confronts himself, he also confronts *other men*. What is true of man's relationship to his labour, to the product of his labour and to himself, is also true of his relationship to other men, and to the labour and the object of the labour of other men.

In general, the proposition that man is estranged from his species-being means that each man is estranged from the others and that all are estranged from man's essence.

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This estrangement partly manifests itself in the fact that the refinement of needs and of the means of fulfilling them gives rise to a bestial degeneration and a complete, crude and abstract simplicity of need; or rather, that it merely reproduces itself in its opposite sense. Even the need for fresh air ceases to be a need for the worker. Man reverts once more to living in a cave, but the cave is now polluted by the mephitic and pestilential breath of civilization. Moreover, the worker has no more than a precarious right to live in it, for it is for him an alien power that can be daily withdrawn and from which, should he fail to pay, he can be evicted at any time. He actually has to *pay* for this mortuary. A dwelling in the *light*, which Prometheus describes in Aeschylus as one of the great gifts through which he transformed savages into men, ceases to exist for the worker. [...]

The simplification of machinery and of labour is used to make workers out of human beings who are still growing, who are completely immature, out of *children*, while the worker himself becomes a neglected child. The machine accommodates itself to man's *weakness*, in order to turn *weak* man into a machine. [...]

[...] Any *luxury* that the worker might enjoy is reprehensible, and anything that goes beyond the most abstract need – either in the form of passive enjoyment or active expression – appears to him as a luxury. Political economy, this science of *wealth*, is therefore at the same time the science of denial, of starvation, of *saving*, and it actually goes so far as to *save* man the *need* for fresh *air* or physical *exercise*. This science of the marvels of industry is at the same time the science of *asceticism*, and its true ideal is the *ascetic* but *rapacious* skinflint and the *ascetic* but *productive* slave. Its moral ideal is the *worker* who puts a part of his wages into savings, and it has even discovered a servile *art* which can dignify this charming little notion and present a sentimental version of it on the stage. It is therefore – for all its worldly and debauched appearance – a truly moral science, the most moral science of all. Self-denial, the denial of life and of all human needs, is its principal doctrine. The less you eat, drink, buy books, go to the theatre, go dancing, go drinking, think, love, theorize, sing, paint, fence, etc., the more you *save* and the greater will become that treasure which neither moths nor maggots can consume – your *capital*. The less you *are*, the less you give expression to your life, the more you *have*, the greater is your *alienated* life and the more you store up of your estranged life. [...]

10 Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) on Historical Materialism

Marx and Engels met in Paris in 1844 in response to Engels' publication of two articles in the radical journal edited by Marx, the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*. After Marx's expulsion from Paris at the instigation of the Prussian authorities, their collaboration continued in Brussels during 1845–7. *The German Ideology*, a 700-page manuscript written in 1845–6, contained the first exposition of their materialist philosophy of history. It was written against the dominant Hegelian philosophical idealism, in which both had been trained. In place of the emphasis on spirit as the motivating factor of human life, Marx and Engels stressed actual social relations, and in particular economic power. They did not however separate questions of 'spirit' from those of society, much less deny their existence altogether. What they did, in effect, was reverse the traditional polarity: they read the world of ideas as dependent on the form of material reality. 'The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas.' The implications for the world of the mind, art practice included, are fundamental. Overtaken by the revolutions of 1848, and unpublished in their lifetime, *The German Ideology* first appeared in the *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe*, Moscow 1932. The present extracts are taken from the translation by W. Lough, C. Dutt and C. P. Magill, edited and introduced by C. J. Arthur, London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1970/74, pp. 37, 42, 46–8, 58–9, 64.

Preface

Hitherto men have constantly made up for themselves false conceptions about themselves, about what they are and what they ought to be. They have arranged their relationships according to their ideas of God, of normal man, etc. The phantoms of their brains have got out of their hands. They, the creators, have bowed down before their creations. Let us liberate them from the chimeras, the ideas, dogmas,